



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# News Release

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## **CALIFORNIA MAN SENTENCED TO 15 MONTHS FOR NATIONWIDE BANK FRAUD SCHEME**

*Used false Korean passports to open bank accounts and defraud banks*

SEATTLE – A 54-year-old Los Angeles man was sentenced here today to 15 months in prison for his role in a scheme to defraud Bank of America branches in six states out of tens of thousands of dollars.

Young Ho Chang was sentenced for conspiracy to commit bank fraud following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Chang admitted he joined with a man he knew as “Paul Lee” to defraud Bank of America branches in Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Florida, Georgia and Illinois. ICE agents arrested Chang last March in Tacoma, where he was using false Korean passports to open private mailboxes that could be used in the bank fraud scheme. Chang pleaded guilty in October 2005.

According to court records, Chang became involved in the scheme in 2003. Chang’s role was to open bank accounts in various states under false identities, using false Korean passports provided by Lee. Chang would deposit checks into these accounts, knowing there were insufficient funds to cover the checks. Chang would then make withdrawals, resulting in losses to the banks. Chang would also write checks on the accounts, knowing there were insufficient funds to cover the checks. Using this scheme, Bank of America branches were defrauded out of more than \$90,000.

In asking for a prison term, Assistant United States Attorney Michael Dion noted that for more than a year Chang traveled from state to state, using the phony documentation to open up bank accounts. “Chang was clearly a sophisticated operator who devoted tremendous time and energy to carrying out this scheme,” Dion wrote to the court.

The investigation into others associated with the scheme remains open.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*